

WORLD

FANTASTIC

ASTONISHING

BAFFLING

RAVE IN



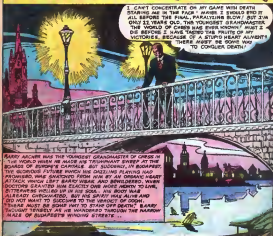
MYSTERIES



FRANK RUSSELL THE TROUBLE

and other strange and exciting tales

a game with lucifer



DUH H! I CAN'T EVEN GRIP THINGS TIGHTLY ANYMORE! BUT WHAT'S THIS SMALL BOOK THAT WAS CONCEALED BEHIND IT!

"DEVIL'S GAMBIT-BY GABRIEL SHALHA." JERRY, HE WAS HARGRANT'S GREATEST CHIEF MASTER OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY! BUT I NEVER HEARD OF THIS BOOK- AND SUCH A WEIRD TITLE- I MUST BUY IT AT ONCE!

"AN ACCOUNT OF AN GREATEST MATCH WITH THE KING OF THE UNDERMORALE AGAINST WHOM I PLAYED FOR LIFE- WIN, THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE! NOW WHERE CAN THAT BOOKSELLER BE? I'LL JUST LEAVE SOME MONEY AND GO!"



THIRTY PENCE SEEMS FAIR ENOUGH! IT'S A BEAUTIFULLY BOUND BOOK! NOW I CAN FIND OUT IF MASTER SHALHA WAS VICTORIOUS IN THIS STRANGE MATCH!



BUT MR BARRY LEFT WITH THE STRANGE BOOK...



HEH, HEH! THE DEVIL'S GAMBIT! HE HAS THE CURSED BOOK! HERE IS ANOTHER MOUTH TO BE CAUGHT IN THE FLAME!

LATER, AT BARRY'S HOTEL ROOM...

THE AMERICAN CHESS TEAM HAS BEEN INVITED TO A GAMBLER IN THE PREMIER PALACE. DO YOU FEEL UP TO COMING ALONG, BARRY?

NO, I- I DON'T FEEL STRONG ENOUGH YET! THANKS, BUT I'LL STAY HOME AND READ!



ED MASTER SHALHA WAS DRINK AND PLAYED FOR CONTINUED LIFE AT THE AGE OF 99 AGAINST THE KING OF THE UNDERMORALE- AND HE WON! HE WAS CHECKMATED!



BUT SHALMA LOST BECAUSE HE WAS A FOOL! THIS GAME, SHOWN IN THE BOOK... I COULD HAVE WON IT EASILY! YES, I WILL FIND THE DRAGON OF HELL, AND PLAY FOR THE GAME STAKES—CONTINUED
LIFE! BUT I WILL WIN!



LATER, AT THE FAMOUS SHALMA GAMES CLUB...

I HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE! THE DOCTOR TELLS ME THAT I WILL BE DEAD IN A MONTH! I WILL CHALLENGE THE DEVIL HIMSELF FOR A CHANCE TO CONTINUE MY LIFE FOR A FEW MORE YEARS!



AN, MASTER ARCHER! NO, THANK YOU! IT IS A PLEASURE TO HAVE YOU AT THE SHALMA CLUB! DO YOU WANT TO THROUZE A FEW OF US, OR IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE WE CAN DO FOR YOU?



BUT SURELY YOU KNOW THE STRANGE LEGENDS SURROUNDING HIS DEATH! WE COULD NOT KEEP THE DEER CORRIDOR PICTURES AT THE CLUB!



IT WAS CLOSE TO MIDNIGHT WHEN BARRY FOUND THE OLD RESIDENCE.

SIR, I WOULD NOT WANDER AROUND "FINE" I HERE AT THIS LATE HOUR! SHALMA! TO SEE THE HOUSE HAS AN EVIL WHICH EVEL REPUTA...



SUDDENLY

MIDNIGHT! AND NOT A SIGN OF ANYONE! NEITHER THE BOOK AND SHALMA HIMSELF ARE ALL A GREAT HOAX!



COME, MASTER SHALMA! IT IS TIME TO REPLAY OUR OLD GAME! PERHAPS TONIGHT YOU WILL WIN!

GOOD HEAVENS! IS THIS A HALLUCINATION? IT'S TERRIFYING! I'M SHAKING LIKE A LEAF!





PLEASE, LET ME
ALONE! I'VE PLAYED
THIS GAME OVER A
HUNDRED TIMES
AND I NEVER
WIN! WHY MUST
I BE TORTURED
LIKE THIS?

HORRIBLE! THEY'RE GONE
RIGHT THROUGH THE SOLID
WALL! I MUST SPEAK TO
THE EVIL STRANGER BEFORE
THIS NIGHT IS OVER!



I CAN'T WALK THROUGH WALLS, BUT THESE
PLANKS ARE ROTTEN! I CAN GET IN
WITHOUT BEING SEEN!



COME, MASTER
GHALMA! IT IS
YOUR MOVE!

IT IS THE SAME AS
ALWAYS! I HAVE NO
MOVE, YOU MEN!



I HAVE YOU NOW,
MASTER GHALMA!
CROAKATE!

NO! NO! STOP! THE PAIN
IS EXCRUCATING!
ARMED!

AT THE FIGURE OF GHALMA DISAPPEARING,
BARRY SPRANG FORWARD...

GHALMA PLAYED TOO AND LOST! I KNOW I
CAN BEAT YOU! I CHALLENGE YOU TO
PLAY FOR THE SAME STAKE-- MY LIFE!

WE SHALL SEE! SO FAR
NO ONE HAS BEATEN
ME, ALTHOUGH MANY
HAVE TRIED! BUT
NOW DAWN IS HERE
AND I MUST
BE GONE!



WHAT! WHO ARE YOU, YOU BLACK-
QUARTERED FREAK! YOU PLAY WITH
DEVILISH FORCES AND YOUR VICTIM
VANISHES IN
TORTURE!
WHEN YOU
PROVEANCE
IT YOU WANT

I AM KNOWN AND
COURSED BY MANY
NAUGHTS! WHAT IS
CROAKATE!

AS IF I DIDN'T
KNOW!



YOU SAW WHAT HAPPENED TO
GHALMA! IF YOU LOSE, THE
PENALTY IS THE SAME!
EVERY YEAR HE PLAYS
AND DIES THE SAME
DEATH!



AND
IF I
WIN?

WE SHALL SEE! SO FAR
NO ONE HAS BEATEN
ME, ALTHOUGH MANY
HAVE TRIED! BUT
NOW DAWN IS HERE
AND I MUST
BE GONE!

WE SHALL MEET
AGAIN SOON...
WHEN YOU LEAST
EXPECT ME!

AND I WISH HAD TO
CHALLENGE THE FIEND
WHO BARRER IN LIVING
FLAMES!

AS
DARK
BRIGHT

DID MY EYES SEE THINGS I HAD IT REALLY
MASTER SHALRA AND THE EVIL ONE
INCARNATE WHO PLAYED HERE LAST
NIGHT FOR THE GREATEST OF STAKES?
DID I SEAL A BARGAIN WITH
THAT WILD FIEND?



A FEW EVENINGS LATER, AT THE
REGULAR TOURNAMENT OF THE
SHALRA CHESS CLUB...

MY TOURNAMENT DOESN'T
START FOR A FEW HOURS. I'LL
JUST TAKE A CORNER TABLE
AND TRY A FEW NEW
OPENINGS!

VERY
GOOD,
SIR!



I'VE PLAYED OVER SHALRA'S GAME
A DOZEN TIMES! HE MADE ONE
BAD MISTAKE BY LOSING THAT
BISHOP! NOW I KNOW I CAN
WIN THAT GAME!



SURELY, WITHOUT WARNING...

WELL, MASTER ARCHER, ARE
YOU READY FOR OUR LITTLE
CONTEST?

FOR—HERE!
Y-YES, I AM
READY!



AND THE
STANES!

THE VERY SAME MASTER,
SHALRA, PLAYED FOR!

AT SOME SPECTATORS PASSED BARRER THERE...

LOOK AT MASTER ARCHER,
CONCENTRATING! WHY HE
PRACTICES AS IF HIS
LIFE DEPENDS ON IT!

AN, WHAT A BRILLIANT
POSITION! NO WONDER
ALL HIS OPPONENTS ARE
BEATEN BEFORE
THEY START!





IT'S AS IF THE GREAT SLAMMER HAD A JOKED IN THE
WINDY NIGHTS WORK! ONE MAN ALONE REMAINS
ALIVE, AND HUNDREDS ARE MUTILATED
AND DEAD!



ONE WINNER IS FOUND IN FULL. AGAIN YOU HAVE WON
MATCH... THEREFORE ONE CHANCE AT LIFE! YOU
SHALL FIGHT AGAIN! SOON!



DAYS LATER, BACK IN NEW YORK...

I'VE BEEN INVITED TO PLAY FOR THE WORLD'S
CHAMPIONSHIP NEXT WEEK, ON THE EXACT DAY ON
WHICH THE DOCTORS PREDICTED MY DEATH! NOW
I HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM DEATH! THE
TRAIN WHICH PROVED THAT I WAS
THE ONLY SURVIVOR!



AT THE NEW YORK CAFE CLUB, THE FOLLOWING WEEK...

KNIGHT
MOVES
TO
CHECK!

ARCHER IS PLAYING BRILLIANTLY! HE'S
SLAUGHTERED THREE OPPONENTS
ALREADY AND THE LAST ONE
LOOKS LIKE HE'S READY TO
GIVE UP!



SUCCESS, WITH HIS LAST MOVE, ARCHER'S KING FALL
ACROSS THE BOARD WITH A SICKENING THUD...



CHECKMATE!
DRAHNU!

GOOD HEARING! HE'S
COLLAPSED! GET A
DOCTOR! HURRY!

IT WAS TOO LATE FOR MEDICAL ATTENTION. ARCHER HAD
LOST THE MATCH IN THE GREAT TOURNAMENT OF LIFE...

LOOK AT THE CHESS PIECE! IT
ROLLED OUT OF ARCHER'S HAND!
I THOUGHT IT WAS A JOKE,
BUT IT DOESN'T BELONG TO
THE SET! WHY, IT
LOOKS LIKE...

THE PIECE, HIMSELF!
NOW TERRIBLY STRANGE!
IT'S AS IF ARCHER
WELD AN ENL. FORCE IN
HIS HAND WHEN
HE HAD NO POWER!



BAFFLING MYSTERIES

#5

ARTHUR REAGAN, WELL KNOWN AMERICAN ARTIST, FINDS A STRANGE SITUATION IN THE SUMMER OF 1927, WHILE VISITING SOME PEOPLE ON LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK. ON HIS HOST'S ESTATE, YOUNG REAGAN DECIDES TO TAKE A STROLL THROUGH THE GARDENS BEFORE DINNER.



THE STRICKLAND FAMILY CERTAINLY HAS A BEAUTIFUL FLOWER GARDEN!



SURELY, AS IF FROM NOWHERE, A GIRL APPEARED -

WELL, I THOUGHT THAT GIRL NEAR THE POOL. WHY, SHE'S BEAUTIFUL! BUT I DON'T HEAR ANYTHING OF HER WALKING ON THESE PATHS? I MUST TALK TO HER!



SHE... SHE'S DISAPPEARING... RIGHT INTO THE MIST OF THE WATER FROM THE FOUNTAIN! IT'S FANTASTIC!



REAGAN, LATER, BACK IN THE MANOR, BEGAN SPEAKING TO HIS HOSTS...

I THOUGHT I WAS YOUR ONLY GUEST THIS WEEK, SON - BUT I SAW A BEAUTIFUL GIRL OUT THERE NEAR THE FOUNTAIN WHO COULD SHE BE?

BUT THERE IS AN OLD SLIP ON THE ESTATE BUT NO? COULD YOU DESCRIBE THIS GIRL TO US? I OR BETTER STILL, DRAW US A SKETCH OF HER?



SOON, WHEN THE SKETCH WAS COMPLETED...

THIS IS THE GIRL I SAW AT THE FOUNTAIN!

BUT IT'S HER! IT'S OUR DAUGHTER, BLAME!



TEN YEARS AGO, HE FORGAVE BLAME TO MARRY A SCANDAL, WITH WHOM SHE WAS INFATIGATED! IN A MOMENT OF MADNESS, SHE DROWNED HERSELF IN THE POOL AT THE FOUNTAIN! YES, IT WAS EXACTLY TEN YEARS AGO THAT THEY SHE KILLED HERSELF!

APPARENTLY HER RESTLESS SPIRIT DWELLS BY THE VERY FOUNTAIN WHERE SHE LEFT THIS WORLD TO ENTER THE NEXT! NOW STRANGE!

STRANGE WORLD! JUST ANOTHER BAZILLION MYSTERY THAT HAS DEFIED LOGICAL EXPLANATION! ANOTHER BIZARRE OCCURRENCE IN THE ANNALS OF THE SUPER-NATURAL!

Fin

SCOURGE of the Kentucky Hills



WANG MURDERER HANG! WE'RE FREE OF YOU, NOW!

THE ONLY THING TO DO WITH SUCH A VICIOUS KILLER! GOOD WORK, HEND- THE- HANGMAN!

IT'S ALL OVER NOW, FOLKS! HE'S BEEN HANGED BY THE NECK UNTIL DEAD!

ON A DREARY AUTUMN NIGHT IN THE KENTUCKY HILL TOWN OF CALGIA, A FRODO, VENGEANCE, HAD JUST ENTERED BLOODTHIRSTILY AT THEIR FIRST PUBLIC HANGING IN A CENTURY. THE VICTIM WAS A HOGG AND WOODS CRAFTY GARY TUMBER WOLF WHICKEY FOR WEREH. HAD BEEN ATTACKING LIVESTOCK AND EVEN SMALL CHILDREN. BEFORE IT WAS TRAPPED ALIVE, SENTENCED TO DEATH, AND HUNG. BUT AS THE GREAT SHAGGY HUNTER-BEAST DANCED AT THE END OF THE ROPE, THE GOOD TOWNSFOLK DIDN'T KNOW THAT THIS WAS NOT THE END OF THEIR TROUBLE, BUT ONLY THE BEGINNING OF A MORE CHASTLY REIGN OF TERROR!

IN HIS OFFICE OVERLOOKING THE TOWN SQUARE, IN A FEVER OF EXCITEMENT, OF VINCENT CURTIS WATCHED THE DRYAL HOG BEGIN TO DISPERSE...

GOOD! THE FOOLS ARE GOING HOME ALREADY, NOT KNOWING THAT THINGS TO REMO AND I. THAT MAGNIFICENT BEAST ISN'T REALLY DEAD, BUT ONLY UNCONSCIOUS!



IT WAS EASY TO FOOL THE CROWD, FOR THE HOGG, SO THAT IT WOULDN'T TIGHTEN TOO MUCH, RUBST OFFATE INTO THE WOLF SO HE ONLY APPEARED TO DIE!



A LITTLE LATER...

THEY'RE ALL HOME AGAIN, MON, HEND. AND IT'S A RICH-BLACK, WOODLESS NIGHT. WE CAN CONTINUE OUR WORK!

I'LL GO SET THE CORPSE OF THE BIG GREY DOG WE FOUND UP IN THE HILLS!

BETTER WORK FAST, HEND! IF ANYONE SPOTS US, SURELY THE DEAD DOG FOR THE STILL LIVE WOLF. WE MIGHT BE LYNNED!

YES, DOCTOR. WILL THERE STILL BE TIME TO PERFORM THE OPERATION TONIGHT?

OF COURSE! THE OPERATION, THOUGH DANGEROUS, IS ACTUALLY VERY SIMPLE!

I-- I STILL DON'T LIKE THE IDEA! IT'S AGAINST ALL THE LAWS OF MAN AND NATURE! BUT YOU'VE DONE ME SO MANY FAVORS AND ARE PAYING ME SO WELL FOR THE WORK, THAT I MUST DO AS YOU WISH!

THIS IS THE DOCTOR'S PRIVATE OPERATING ROOM. PREPARATIONS WERE MADE CAREFULLY FOR A NEW AND AWESOME TYPE OF OPERATION...

THESE WOUNDS MUST BE ARRANGED JUST RIGHT, BECAUSE WE MUST LOSE A SECOND OF TIME AFTER I CUT THE LIVE HEART OUT OF THE WOLF! YOU ALMOST READY, HEND?

YES, DOCTOR!

BRACE UP, HEND! YOU'RE ONLY HELPING TO SAVE AN LIFE. THE HIGHEST MEDICAL AUTHORITIES ADMIT THAT WITH AN BAD HEART I HAVE ONLY A FEW WEEKS TO LIVE. BUT THAT WILL BE CHANGED TONIGHT WHEN I REPLACE AN DISEASED ORGAN WITH THE STRONG, HEALTHY HEART OF THE MAGNIFICENT BEAST!

A HUMAN HEART WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER, BUT WE COULDN'T COMMIT MURDER. AND THE WILL DO THIS! AM! A PERFECT SOLUTION!

THE DOCTOR'S SKILLED HANDS WORKED SWIFTLY. SOON

INCREASE THE CURRENT, HEND, TO KEEP THE WOLF'S HEART BEATING STRONGLY IN THE PRESERVATIVE. WHILE WE BEGIN THE SECOND PART OF THE OPERATION!

A NEW WINTER LATER, UNDER LOCAL ANESTHESIA, DR. CURTIS RE-ENTERED AND SURGERIED AS BEFORE. AROUND THE INCISION AND PREPARED TO RE-PLACE THE DOCTOR'S OWN HEART, TO REPLACE IT WITH THE WOLF'S...

HURRY, MEMO! I FEEL MYSELF GETTING WEAKER! YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO IF I FAINT! OBEY MY INSTRUCTIONS TO THE LETTER! NO MISTAKES, MEMO!



YES!
YES!

HIS UNCONSCIOUS, BUT THE TRANSPLANTING OF THE WOLF'S HEART IS COMPLETE! A SHOT OF STIMULANT WILL BRING HIM AROUND AGAIN, AFTER I'VE FINISHED SEWING UP THE INCISION!



AM, THE STIMULANT SEEMED TO TAKE A-GAT. MARISH ORGASM IS OVER.



ALL THAT NIGHT, DR. CURTIS'S RESTLESS SLEEP WAS DISTURBED BY HORROR NIGHTMARES...



YOU ARE NO LONGER A MAN!

YOU POSSESS THE HEART AND SOUL OF A CRUEL AND WICKED MONSTER!

BUT THE NEXT MORNING...

IT WORKED! A SURGICAL MIRACLE! I FEEL BETTER NOW THAN I HAVE IN YEARS! WAIT UNTIL LOUISE SEES ME AND HEARS THAT I'M CURED! NOW WE CAN GET MARRIED!



SOON... IT'S ME, ALL RIGHT, LOUISE! DON'T LOOK SO SURPRISED! MY HEART TROUBLE'S CURED, DARLING! I'VE COME TO MAKE WEDDING PLANS!



YOU DO LOOK DIFFERENT... HEALTHIER, YINCE! BUT WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOUR HAIR? IT'S GROWN SUDDENL'Y LONG, AND HAS SUCH A STRANGE GRAY COLOR!

YOU'RE RIGHT! IT... IT MUST BE THE NEW HEART MEDICINE I'VE BEEN TAKING TO CURE ME! I'LL GET MY HAIR CUT AND DYE IT, THEN I'LL LOOK THE SAME!

OF COURSE, YINCE! DON'T GET SO EXCITED AND ANGRY! IT'S ALL RIGHT! I DON'T MIND!



BACK AT HIS OWN QUARTERS, DR. QUINTE SPENT THE REST OF THE DAY TRYING TO RESTORE THE NATURAL LENGTH AND COLOR AND TEXTURE TO HIS HAIR... BUT...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND! NOTHING HAS WORKED! I CUT MY HAIR, AND ALMOST IMMEDIATELY IT BECAME NEAR AGAIN! I CUT IT OFF, TIME AND TIME AGAIN, BUT IT GROWS RIGHT BACK THE SAME WAY!



THAT NIGHT, AS THE FULL MOON RODE OVER THE TOWN...

I CAN'T GO OUT AND LET PEOPLE SEE ME UNTIL I CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS HORRIBLE CHANGE IN MY HAIR! IT'S BECOME LIKE A WOLF'S SHAGGY FUR! PEOPLE MIGHT SUSPECT THAT... AH! HERE COMES NERO! PERHAPS HE CAN HELP!



NO! NO! IT-- IT CAN'T BE!

YOU SOUNDING TERRIFIED POOL! WHAT'S THE MATTER? WHAT ARE YOU STAGGERING AT?



SOMETHING HORRIBLE'S HAPPENED TO YOU! YOU LOOK LIKE AN ANIMAL... A WILD BEAST!

MY... MY HANDS AND ARMS!



WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE MIRROR? I CAN'T SEE MY REFLECTION! IT MUST BE BROKEN! OR ELSE MY EYES...

NO! IT'S OUR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT FOR PERFORMING AN OPERATION AGAINST THE LAWS OF NATURE! YOU HAVE TURNED INTO A WEREWOLF!



SOON YOU'LL BE KILLED WITH A LUST TO KILL! I MUST WARN THE TOWN!

YOU CAN'T! I WON'T LET YOU! NOBODY MUST KNOW!



AS WEAD STRUGGLED TO GET AWAY, BESTIAL RAGE SUDDENLY SWAMPED OVER THE DOCTOR. TERRIBLE, PRIMITIVE URGES SWAMPED HIM AS THE KILL-INSTINCT TOOK FULL POSSESSION, AND POOR WEAD DIED HORRIBLY!



ALL GUMP MEN'S COFFEE IN SOME LONELY PLACE? IT'S STRANGE, BUT I FEEL CALM AND PEACEFUL NOW THAT IT'S OVER!



COMPLETING HIS FIRST MISSION, THE DOCTOR, TURNED HIMSELF, RETURNING HOME AND SLEPT SOUNDLY. THE NEXT MORNING...



I'VE CHANGED BACK TO HUMAN FORM AGAIN! WE'RE MOVING ARE ONLY NIGHT CREATURES! PERHAPS IT WAS ONLY A TEMPORARY THING AND WON'T EVER HAPPEN AGAIN!

LATER THAT DAY...

THEY'RE FOUND POOR DEAD NEMO! THERE'LL BE THE DEVILS FOR NOW, BUT THEY WON'T CONNECT ME WITH THE MURDER!

THERE'S A WASTE TO THE WOLF WE HANDED, FRYING ON THE COASTS. BUT THEY WON'T HAVE TO WASTE AND KILL THE ONE TOO. IF ANYONE IS TO REMAIN SAFE!



THEY CAME TO ME!

NOW THAT IT'S DARK, I'VE CHANGED AGAIN! I'D BETTER SEE ABOUT ALL THAT NOISE OUTSIDE! SOMETHING IS GOING ON!



WE'LL SCOUR THE COURTSIDE UNTIL WE FIND THE SECOND BLOOD-MAD BEAST! WE MUST KILL HIM BEFORE HE CAN CLAIM ANOTHER VICTIM!

GO AHEAD, YOU FOOL—HUNT FOR HIM! BUT I'M TOO CLEVER FOR YOU!



HUNT ME DOWN, WILL THEY? I'LL FOLLOW THEM AND SHOW THEM I'M MORE CLEVER THAN THEY ARE!



THE WEREWOLF HOLDING THE FORCE AT A SAFE DISTANCE. THEN, WHEN THE RIGHT MOMENT CAME, SHOWING WITH THE INSANE DESIRE TO SLAY, HE MADE HIS VICIOUS, FATAL ATTACK!

GROWWWWW!



ARGH!

HE SHOULD BE TO BE
SATISFIED, THE BEAST
HAD TOWNED HOME.
BUT SUDDENLY...

OHMY! I'M CAUGHT IN
ONE OF THE WOLF TRAPS
THEY'VE SET OUT!



IT'S A TOTAL TERROR ALL THAT NIGHT.
THE WEREWOLF TRIED TO FREE
HIMSELF FROM THE TRAP, BUT
THE RUSTED, TOOTHED JAW
REBUILT ALL HIS EXERTION
JUST AFTER DAWN...

SCARS OF THE FUROR COMING
THIS WAY! THANK HEAVENS
THEY DIDN'T FIND ME UNTIL
AFTER DAYLIGHT, WHEN I'D
CHANGED BACK TO
HUMAN FORM AGAIN!



YOU SAY YOU
CAME OUT
ALONE TO
JOIN THE
HUNT, DOC?
BUT YOU'RE
UNARMED!
HOW COME?

STOP
QUESTIONING
ME, BRUCE! I
JUST FELT
LIKE HUNTING
THE BEAST
ALONE!



FAMILIAR BY THE SURPRISE DISCOVERY
OF BRUCE GARDNER, DR. CARTER LOCKED HIMSELF
IN HIS ROOM ALL DAY THAT EVENING, HE
PRESSED HARDER WHEN ASKED TO JOIN
THE WOLF HUNT, THEN, LATER...

VINCE, IT'S LOUIS. YOU'VE GOT TO LET ME IN!
SOMETHING'S WRONG! I HEAR STRANGE
GROWLING AND CLAWING SOUNDS IN THERE!
LET ME IN!

AND YOU'RE MISTAKEN! GO
AWAY! LEAVE ME ALONE,
LOUIS!



A FEW MINUTES LATER...

VINCE, I'M SORRY,
BUT BRUCE AND I
WERE SO WORRIED
WE CLIMBED IN
THROUGH A BACK
WINDOW AND...
GROOOO!
VINCE!

YES, IT'S ME, LOUIS.
BUT YOU SHOULD
HAVE COME IN! NOW
I'LL HAVE TO KILL
BRUCE, SO WE CAN'T
TELL ANYONE ABOUT
ME!



YOU SUSPECTED ME SINCE YOU
FOUND ME IN THE TRAP THE
MORNING, DON'T YOU FOR
BRINGING LOUIS HERE AND
EXPOSING ME, YOU'LL DIE
LIKE THE OTHERS!

I-- I CAN'T
RIGHT NOW,
DOC! I'M
POWERFUL!
LOUIS--
RUN, GET
HELP!
ASH!



WAIT, LOUIS! DON'T
TELL ANYBODY! I
STILL LOVE YOU!
I'LL BE THE
GAME AS
ALWAYS IN
THE MORNING!

NO,
VINCE!
YOU--
YOU'RE
NO
LONGER
HUMAN!

THIS
IS MY
CHANCE
TO
ESCAPE!



AFTER LOUISE AND BRUCE ESCAPED, THE WEREWOLVES SPREAD AND SOON...

THAT AGE IS AFTER ME! NOW THAT THEY KNOW WHAT I AM, I WON'T HAVE A CHANCE HERE! THEY'LL BURN DOWN THE HOUSE! I'LL HAVE TO LEAVE AND HIDE IN THE HILLS!



LATER... I MADE IT SAFELY INTO THE HILLS. NOW THEY'LL NEVER GET ME! I CAN LIVE HERE IN THE CAVE AND HANGAR AND ATTACK BY NIGHT AND SLEEP BY DAY! I'M TOO CLEVER TO EVER BE CAUGHT!



A WEEK PASSED, AND IT SEEMED THAT THE WEREWOLVES HAD TOO CLEVER TO BE CAPTURED THEN, ONE NIGHT...

SO LOUISE AND BRUCE ARE GETTING MARRIED NEXT TUESDAY! I WON THEM ALL THE HAPPINESS IN THE WORLD! POOR LOUISE OBSERVED A BREAK AFTER ALL THE TERROR SHE HAD WITH THAT BEAST CURSE!

LOUISE AND BRUCE ARE GETTING MARRIED! THEY--THEY CAN'T! I WON'T LET THEM! NO MATTER WHAT I AM, SHE'S STILL MINE!



I'LL STOP THE WEDDING! EVEN IF I HAVE TO KILL THEM BOTH! GREAT!



AND SO, CRAZED BY A WEEK OF JEALOUS BROODING, ON THE NIGHT OF THE WEDDING...



THEY'RE COMING OUT NOW! I WILL HAVE MY REVENGE!

SHORTEL... HE ESCAPED ONCE FROM OUR BULLETS, BUT THESE ARROWS DIFFER IN MACHINERY. WILL KILL ANY WEREWOLF!



AIEEE!



DEATH BROUGHT HIM RELEASE AT LAST FROM HIS HORRIBLE GOAL PERSONALITY! HE... HE'S BETTER OFF NOW, LOUISE!



POOR VINCE!

The End

BAFFLING MYSTERIES

6

THERE HAS BEEN A GREAT DEAL OF DISCUSSION CONCERNING MEDiums AND SOUL SEANCES. AT TIMES THEY SUPPOSEDLY CALL FROM SPIRITS OF THE DEAD. MOST PEOPLE REGARD IT AS A FAKE, BUT HERE IS THE STORY OF ONE MEDIUM WHO WAS CALLED UPON TO AID THE LAW IN A MURDER CASE...

ONE DAY, IN 1928, THE BODY OF A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN WAS FOUND IN A PARK IN A LARGE EASTERN CITY...

HER PAPERS GAVE HER: MRS. VAN RITTER! NOW, SHE WAS THE RICH SOCIETIC ON LAKELAND AVENUE!

THAT'S RIGHT... AND SHE WAS SLUGG ABOUT CLOUTY STUDENT! USED TO ATTEND SEANCES!



SINCE SHE BELIEVED IN THE POWER OF CONTACTING SPIRITS FROM THE BEYOND, PERHAPS WE CAN GET A "MEDIUM" TO CONTACT MRS. VAN RITTER, WHEREVER HER SPIRIT IS NOW, AND HAVE HER NAME HER MURDERER?



SO LIEUTENANT COFFMAN AND THE POLICE SEARCHED UNTIL ONE OF MRS. VAN RITTER'S "MEDIUM" FRIENDS, A "MADAME WARD", SHE AGREED TO "CONTACT" THE DEAD WOMAN'S SPIRIT. THE BEING WAS BOOM...



DOWN... DOWN... I FEEL THE PRESENCE OF THE ONE I SEEK! COME FORTH, SPIRIT... COME FORTH!

SUDDENLY, A PHOTOLIC APPARITION OF THE DEAD WOMAN APPEARED...



IT'S ME!

I AM HERE! WHAT DO YOU WANT OF ME?

WE SEEK THE NAME OF YOUR MURDERER! CAN YOU TELL US?

MY ALICE... MY BUTLER... HE IS AN MURDERER! I WAS RETURNING FROM A PARTY... IN MOORE OF AERIALS... SPARKS WERE IN PARK. I WORE MY VALUABLE LACON DIAMOND NECKLACE! BUTLER, WHY HE IN PARK... STRANGLED ME... STOLE NECKLACE!



WHEN CONVINCED THE POLICE HAD AGREED TO THE BUTLER'S WORDS IN THE DEAD WOMAN'S HOME, DISCOVERED THE NECKLACE, AND FORCED A COMPLETE CONFESSON FROM THE PRISONERED KILLER!

YOU MAY NOT BELIEVE THIS, BUT THE SPIRIT OF MRS. VAN RITTER CAME BACK TO ACCUSE YOU! YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE PICKED ON A BELIEVER IN THE GODDIT FOR YOUR VICTIM!

IT'S I FORGOT! NOW SHELL RECK COMING BACK TO HAUNT ME! WHY DID I DO IT? WHY? WHY?

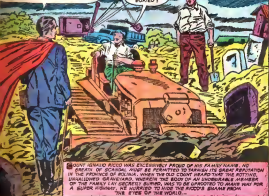
THIS INCIDENT IS RECORDED ON THE POLICE RECORDS OF A CERTAIN AMERICAN CITY, PROBABLY THE ONLY TIME A MURDER CASE HAS BEEN SOLVED BY HAVING THE VICTIM'S SPIRIT "APPEAR" TO NAME MURDERER. AND YET, THE "POWER" OF A MEDIUM ARE SAID TO BE A FAKE! WHO CAN SAY?



BACK FROM AN UNHALLOWED GRAVE

"WHEN YOU TALK OF IF YOU KNOW HOW TO KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT, THERE'S A FIVE THOUSAND DOLLAR BONUS FOR YOU! HIDE THE COFFIN OF ONE NAMED EUGENE RUDD AND BRING IT TO ME SECRETLY, AND THE MONEY IS MINE!"

"AAM, THEN YOU ARE COUNT RUDD! WITH YOUR EXCELLENCE, IS THE BODY NOT BURIED AT THE GREAT MARBLE VAULT WHERE ALL THE RUDDS ARE BURIED?"



Count Ridd was exceedingly proud of his family name, no matter of scandal, and he permitted to furnish its great reputation in the province of Indiana. When the old Count heard that the rotting, unhalloved graveyard, wherein the body of an endurable member of the family lay secretly buried, was to be uprooted to away with a silver hammer, he hurried to hide the Ridd's shame from the eyes of the world.

"YOU ARE VERY INSOLENT! IT IS A SECRET WHICH WILL BRING DOWN YOUR LINE! DO NOT ASK ANY MORE, OTHERWISE, I'LL BRING DOWN THE COFFIN!"

"SI, BISHOP COUNT - I DO NOT MEAN TO FIGHT!"



"AND REMEMBER, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES MUST THE LARGE SPIKE WHICH PIERCES THE COFFIN BE REMOVED!"

"IT SHALL BE AS YOU SAY, COUNT RUDD!"



WHEN THE COURT HAD LEFT...

THESE PEOPLE ARE ALL ALIVE! I'LL
PICKED UP WITH PRIDE AND POOL-
ISH BOASTING! THERE MUST
BE A DARK, FANTASY SECRET IN
THAT COURT!

WOT ARE QUESTIONS!
FOR FIVE THOUSAND
LIRA, I WOULD DIE UP
THE DEVIL, HANGS!



IT'S OUTTIME TIME...

HEY PETER, HEART
HE THAT SOUND?
IT RANG LIKE
METAL! SHALL
I TAKE A
LOOK?

SOOT
BUTTER

NOW - WHEN
THE WHISTLE
BLOWS, I
STOP WORK. NO
MATTER WHAT
HAPPENS!



MOVING LATER, IN THE NIGHT, DR-
UMMED FIELD, THERE WAS A
SUDDEN, BATHY-SCATTERING
ARMATION



FROM THE BOMBS OF THE BATHY, LONG REED CAPTIVE,
EMERGED THE MURDER KNIGHT AS
SILVA RIDD...

WHY IS MY FINAL BERTIME PLACE DISTURBED?
AND... IS THIS THE PLACE, GUSSEN FOR A RIDD
TO US? I HAVE BEEN BETRAYED... CHEATED!



AHH, HERE IS THE WHO CAN ANSWER MY
QUESTIONS! HIS FEET SHOW WHO I HAVE
BEEN TORN FROM THIS EARTH!



JAIRRE!
WH-WHAT
ARE
YOU?

YOU CUD! WHAT ARE YOU STARRING
AT? I HAVE YOU NEVER SEEN A FACE
LIKE THIS BEFORE?



BEYOND THE GRAVE MY DILIGENT STILL PURSUES
ME? DR, YOU TERRIFIED JELLYFISH, AND FROM
YOUR HEART'S BLOOD I WILL TAKE STRENGTH!



STAY-A-WHILE BRIGADIER HIS COMRADES FLEEING...



"THE POOR POOL
IS DEAD AND NOW
-A FRIENDS
COME TO THE
MONSTER'S MIND!
I MUST BE
GONE!"

"PISTOL, WHERE ARE YOU?
BY ALL THE GAMES IN
HEAVEN! LOOK- HE IS
IN THE ARMS OF
THAT FIEND!"

HERE, YOU BARBARIC
SWINE! TAKE YOUR
FRIENDS COME!
BEHOLD THE MONSTER!
SHE HAS KILLED
PISTOL!



"THE SPINE WAS REMOVED FROM
POOR, PISTOL- HE WOULD NOT
INVESTIGATE THAT MONSTER! NOW
HE IS DEAD AND THAT BIG
DEVIL MONSTER IS FREE TO
SPRINKLE AND KILL INNOCENT
PEOPLE!"



FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER...

"I AM HOME AGAIN! IT IS
A LONG TIME SINCE I HAVE
HEARD THE SOUND OF
MUSIC AND LAUGHTER!
SURELY I WILL BE
WELCOME IN MY
OWN HOME!"



THE COUNT WAS WEARING A ROSE COSTUME
PARTY, FOR THE MOMENT, ELENA'S
OUTLANDISH APPEARANCE ATTRACTED
NO GREAT ATTENTION.

"HOW WONDERFUL! A COSTUME PARTY!
I WISH I HAD A SUITABLE COSTUME
TO WEAR!"



THE END OF CONVERSATION DEVELOPED AS
ELENA, PRESSED BY...

"WHO IS THIS STRANGE
MAN? HE'S WEARING
A ROSE COSTUME!
HE'S WEARING
A ROSE COSTUME!
HE'S WEARING
A ROSE COSTUME!"



"I DON'T KNOW, MARIA,
YOU MUST ADMIT THE
COSTUME IS ORIGINAL.
LOOK, ALL THE GUESTS
ARE BEGINNING TO TALK!
I MUST DO
SOMETHING!"

"I HAVE ACCOUNTED FOR ALL MY GUESTS
BUT NOT THAT WOMAN! I DON'T KNOW
WHO SHE IS! DANCE WITH HER, ALONSO!
FIND OUT WHO SHE IS AND PERSUADE
HER TO LEAVE!"



"VERY WELL,
COUNT!"

I SIMPLY HAD TO HAVE THIS DANCE! SO MANY PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT YOU! WHO ARE YOU?

I AM AN OLD RUDD-RELATION OF THE ROCKET! I CAME UN-ANNOUNCED TO SURPRISE THEM!

BUT WHERE DID YOU COME FROM? NOBODY I KNOW KNOWS YOU WERE. IT IS MY MYSTERY!

LET US SAY I MAKE COME FROM "ACFOWTY"!

THE COME-UP FOR THE REBELS TO URMAR HAS ANNOUNCED...

THE COME-UP HAS ANNOUNCED THE REBELS WOMAN THE PRIZE FOR HER MOST ORIGINAL COSTUME! YES! YOU PRESENT IT, ALMO!

YES-- AND IT IS UNMAGINE TIME! NOW WE SHALL SEE WHAT THIS "MAD" LOOKS LIKE! SHE IS PROBABLY YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL!



FOR YOU, MADAME! THE FIRST PRIZE FOR THE MOST FIGHTING AND ORIGINAL COSTUME OF THE BALL! AND NOW, WILL YOU PLEASE URMAR?

SEVERAL COSTUMES? AWESOME! YOU ROCK ME!



... SHE WAS MADDERED WITH RAGE ...

LOOK UPON ME, ALL OF YOU! THIS IS NO MASK! IT IS MY OWN FACE, THE FACE OF ELENA, BEGGED, KNOWN, TWENTY YEARS AGO, AS THE LOVER'S SIGNORINA IN BOLINA!

LET ME GO! AHHH!



SHE IS MAD! SHE WILL KILL ME! NO! GUARDS! COME AT ONCE!

HERE, TAKE THIS WHITE-CLOTHED BOY! HE HITS AT MY DRESS! AM MA!



THE GUARDS FLEW TOWARD THE BALCONY...

COME BACK HERE, YOU MURDERER!

POOR ALMO! THANK HEAVENS SHE ONLY SCRATCHED YOU!



AFTER THE BLOOD WAS DEPLETED.

"SU" WAS THE ONE CLAMORING FOR CURTAINS. SHE IS A KIDDER BUT SHE SINGS LIKE SOMEONE FROM BEYOND THE STARS."

"SHE IS BORN SOMEWHERE. ELENA IS MY NICK, NOW THIRTY YEARS DEAD. I LISTEN TO HER STRANGE STORY..."



"ELENA WAS A VERY LOVELY CHILD, BUT SENSITIVE AND POSSESSED OF A PERILOUS TEMPER..."

"GET OUT! YOU PARASITES! YOU COME HERE TO WIN AND DINE, BUT NOT ONE MIND WORD DO YOU HAVE FOR ELENA!"

"DO YOU THINK WE COME TO GAZE ON YOUR BEAUTY? HA HA! CONGRATULATIONS, ELENA, THE ONLY YOU ARE CALLED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY!"



"LATER..."

"AND MOST BEAUTIFUL! A SIGHT I SHALL NEVER FORGET!"

"THERE IS ONE WHO DOESN'T THINK SHE WAS! IT IS SUZUKO AND HE IS SO RACIOUS! I HAVE LOST HIM SECRETLY FOR A LONG TIME!"



"OH, SU! DO, THEN, YOU REMIND THEM I AM BEAUTIFUL?"

"HAPPY GOOD EVENING, HO! I WAS ADMIRING THE CONSTELLATIONS OUT THERE! LOOK HOW MAGNIFICENT VENUS LOOKS!"



"IT WAS THE LAST STRIKE WITH A CRY OF RAGE..."



"AND I AM! YOU FOOL! DON'T DO IT!"

"ALBERT!"

"SUZUKO SURVIVED THE SUICIDE LEAP, BUT A BRAIN OPERATION WAS NECESSARY. AFTER THE OPERATION, SHE BECAME HOPELESSLY MAD..."



"HOW DARE YOU LET ME LIVE! I AM WORSE THAN THIS BEFORE! I WILL KILL ALL OF YOU AND THEN YOU AND YOUR BLOOD ARE!"

"TAKE HER TO THE VOLANT YARD! SHE IS COMPLETELY INSANE AND SHOWS VAMPIRE TENDENCIES!"

"WHEN ELENA DIED IN A SOLITARY CELL, AN IRON SPIKE WAS THRUST THROUGH HER HEART..."



"THE STRIKE WILL BEER HER FASTENED IN HER GRAVE, COUNT RICCO!"

"I WANT HER BURIED IN THE PAUPER'S CEMETERY! SHE DOESN'T BELONG IN THE RICH VALLEY! SHE IS AN INHUMAN CREATURE!"



THAT IS ELENA'S TRASH BOX! SHE MUST BE FOLLO AND RETURNED TO HER GRAVE! I'M TRULY SORRY THAT THIS COULD HAD TO MAR YOUR HAPPINESS!

THE CLOUD WILL PASS, BRAND. FATHER, AND HE WILL BE MARRIED!

3. TERRIBLE, ELENA FOUND HERSELF IN A TERRIBLE PLACE...

YES, I REMEMBER—THAT IS THREE GOOD LIVES! A LIGHT IS BURNING IN HIS OBSERVATORY. HE WAS ALWAYS FASCINATED BY THE STARS! PERHAPS AFTER ALL THESE YEARS HE HAS CHANGED HIS MIND ABOUT ME!



BEHOLD, FATHER! WHO IN THE WORLD ARE YOU WANT DO YOU WANT?

IT IS I—ELENA, WHO ALMOST GAVE HER LIFE FOR YOU, LOVE! DO NOT GROSS ME NOW, BRAND?



DON'T COME NEAR ME! YOU ARE DEAD! THE SPIRIT OF THE GRAVE IS ON YOUR BREATH, AND YOUR FACE... IT IS DRIER THAN EVER!

SO ABOUT YOU SPEAK ME! THIS TIME, I WILL NOT TRY TO KILL MYSELF! IT IS YOUR LIFE I CARE NOW, AND THE BURNING NECTAR AT YOUR THROAT!



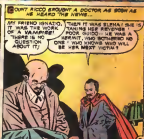
OH, YOU STAY-NEED POOL! YOU WOULD RATHER HAVE THE UNATTAINABLE THAN ELENA, WHO LOVES YOU!

WE'LL ARRIVE!



THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN AN OLD HOUSE-KEEPER ARRIVED...

SIGNOR MASCAINI, I... AHHH! HE IS DEAD! IMMEDIATELY HELP! HELP!



MY FRIEND IGNAZIO, IT WAS THE WORK OF A SALARIES! THERE IS NO QUESTION ABOUT IT!

THEN IT WAS ELENA! SHE IS TAKING HER REVENGE! POOR, OHIO... HE WAS A SPY, WHO BOASTED NO ONE WHO KNOWS WHO WILL BE HER NEXT VICTIM!

AND RECONSTRUCTION FOLLOWED THE WASTELAND, COMING TO ITS FINAL FESTIVE PLACE...



The End.

THE MUMMY'S CURSE

Fame was Eric Thorwald's god, and there was one person who stood in his way to the attainment of the degree of fame in the archaeological world which he sought. That person was Cass Lyman, the man who supplied the funds for Thorwald's excavations. Lyman's advanced wealth enabled him to buy almost anything he wished, with little effort on his own part. Through the labor of Thorwald's hands and mind, he sought to buy that one thing which Thorwald desired most for himself.

A nicely worded, but legally unimpeachable clause in their contract indicated that Lyman was to receive credit for any of what Eric Thorwald accomplished.

Thorwald studied the dim, delirious features of the mummified princess for a moment. Then his gaze centered on the rectangular golden ornament fastened over her bosom.

There had been nothing really unusual about the exquisitely tooled golden asp at its center, for the sacred serpent of Egypt is found everywhere in the art of the Pharaohs. But when, recognizing the great value of the ornament, he had followed his natural impulse and begun fingering it to examine it more closely, something entirely unprecedented had happened.

A tiny catch had been released, and in response a slender spring of coiled wire had leaped, with the quickness of thought, from the asp's mouth. By some marvellous chance the two locking needles at the end of the spring had slipped between the fingers of one of his hands, without piercing the skin. If it had—well—Eric Thorwald had a fairly certain idea about what would have been his fate.

The tongue of the asp still protruded from its mouth. Customarily Thorwald clasped the spring just below the point where the needles were fastened. Little beads of sweat broke out on his forehead when he noted the keenness of those slender points of hardened bone, and the thin, hairless-looking coating of lacinated green substance that covered them. In Thorwald's mind there was a conviction that it was some deadly concoction prepared by a clever chemist in a temple laboratory of ancient Egypt.

"I'm satisfied, mummy," Thorwald whispered. "That is the way Cass Lyman will die!"

Thorwald wrote a brief message for Lyman. Then he left the tent and sought out Said among the stony of the workmen. In a few minutes, a truck was hurrying down the shadowy gorge toward Luxor in the Nile Valley ten miles away.

"Now for the remainder of what we must do," Thorwald muttered when he was again alone with the mummy.

The mummy's breastplate bore a (cartouche, or

hieroglyphic royal name, which Thorwald recognized as belonging to one or several of the famous Nineteenth kings of the sixteenth and seventeenth dynasties. Those ancient rulers each had such a host of names and titles that it was not always easy to keep them straight.

The breastplate was loosed to the mummy wrappings by means of a delicately wrought golden pin, the upper portion of which was fashioned in the form of the mouth of a sacred beetle. It also bore an almost microscopic Ramessid cartouche.

Thorwald immediately saw the great value of the bit of jewelry. He had a similar though far less precious pin in his possession, which he knew he could substitute for this one with perfect impunity. No need to let the Cairo Museum take possession of it, as it certainly would do, backed up as it was by the law of Egypt regarding the distribution of antiquities.

Donning a pair of gloves, he made the change quickly, being careful to rub incriminating fingerprints from the pin which he substituted for the more valuable one. Then, coolly he set to work on his more important task.

He took out his jackknife and wrapped a corner of his handkerchief about its blade. With the blade thus padded, so that it would leave no tell-tale scratches on the metal, he began to work the spiral spring, coil by coil, back into the golden asp's mouth. It was a nerve-racking ordeal, but at last it was accomplished. The poisoned needles disappeared into the maw of the serpent, and the clasp-like catch held the asp's tongue in place.

Later when the truck started from Luxor, Thorwald was cool and collected and ready to his job part perfectly.

Said was at the wheel, beside him was the driver, portly figure of Cass Lyman, and squeezed in at the edge of the seat was another man. Thorwald gave a little inward start. He had not expected a third person. But no, it would make no difference.

"Hello, Thorwald!" Lyman greeted with a kind of barking joviality. "Come as quickly as I could to see for myself just how good our luck has been." Lyman pointed to the stranger beside him.

"This is Mahmud Abadi," Lyman offered informally. "Mr. Abadi didn't come along with me solely because he's interested in archaeology. You see he's connected with the Secret Service of the Egyptian police, and part of his business is to persuade fortunate Egyptologists from smuggling valuable antiquities out of the country."

Thorwald's heart missed a beat on learning that this was a Secret Service man, but he quickly reassured himself. It was all the better that he should

have such a witness to Lyman's death. It would save many painful explanations. Fair was indeed on his side.

"And now," Lyman cut in, "let's have a look at the mummy you found, Thorwald. You say you haven't examined it at all yet?"

"Well," Thorwald said with a broad laugh, "I did let the lid a little to peep in. Curiosity got the better of me to that extent. But I thought it best to wait until you had arrived here, before I did anything further."

The three men entered Thorwald's room, and there the archaeological excavator witnessed the clever murder he had planned. Nothing went wrong and he enjoyed every bit of the little drama, or almost every bit.

He glanced anxiously over the gurgling screams for an surprise and pleasure which Lyman gave at sight of the golden bauble on the mummy's bosom. Equally pleasant was Lyman's greedy and aesthetic gaze to finger the golden ornament of death.

Then the trigger was sprung, and with a vicious, twanging sound, the golden cap struck! The powerful spring drove the poisoned needles deep into Cass Lyman's shoulder.

With a hoarse shriek he leaped back, his features contorted into a grin of mingled pain, surprise, and mortal agony. Then he stiffened, suppled, his staggering legs quivered, and he fell to the ground.

As was to be expected, Mahmud Abadi remained cool. With Thorwald, he leaped to Lyman's side, and together, they stretched his stiffening body on the floor of the room.

"In the name of reason, what has happened?" Thorwald demanded, seemingly regarding possession of himself. "What can we do for him?"

Mahmud Abadi's ear was at Lyman's heart. He straightened and smiled faintly. "There is nothing we can do for him," he said slowly. "He is dead!"

Mahmud Abadi arose and strode to the mummy case, where the spring of the serpent's tongue still whirled. He examined the golden pectoral briefly.

"The dark science of ancient Egypt seems to be responsible," he said. "It is a device evidently intended to mark the undoing of death robbers. Rather strange. I have heard of such infernal machines, but I never saw one before. Of course, Mr. Thorwald, in situations like this it is necessary to make the most complete investigation possible. My presence here is very opportune. You say that no one touched anything in this coffin?" Mahmud Abadi questioned.

"Certainly not," Thorwald replied. "As I said, I peeped in, that was all. And I assure you that none of my men are allowed any liberties in my tent."

The Egyptian detective was looking at the mummy. This is very queer, Mr. Thorwald," he said. "Look!" His fat forefinger was pointing toward the lapis lazuli mouth of the pin which Thorwald had

substituted for the pin of gold that had originally supported the golden pectoral on the mummy's bosom.

Thorwald smiled. "What is queer?" he questioned, in a perfect imitation of odd interest.

"See?" Mahmud Abadi replied. "This strange pin bears the cartouche, *Uter-Ma-Re-Mer-Amen*, one of the numerous names of the Pharaoh who is now known as Ramses III, while this breastplate bears the cartouche, *Joseph-Ka-Mer-Amen*, or Ramses II. Between the reigns of the two lies a gap of fifty-three years! Odd, don't you think, that a priestess, who obviously was buried at least half a century before Ramses III ascended the throne, should wear an amulet bearing his cartouche?"

"I think I understand, Mr. Thorwald. Even an expert can make such a trifling and not easily noticed mistake. These ancient monarchs had so many titles that it is difficult to remember them all correctly. But I must remind you that in Egypt, murder is a crime punishable by death!"

Thorwald's jaw tightened. "Is that an accusation?" he demanded levelly.

Mahmud Abadi shrugged. "Well, without a doubt the coffin was opened since it was removed from the tomb. Only you could have opened it. Oriental customs do not matter matters as Western parties do to them. Clearly, you substituted this scab pin for another probably much more valuable — one which you desired for yourself."

In making the charge, which required that you touch the breastplate separately, you could not have remained unaware of its sinister purpose. There can be but one conclusion: That you willfully placed the death of your employer, Cass Lyman!

"The evidence is against you. Except for that trifling error of date, you committed a perfect crime, invoking the dark wisdom of Ancient Egypt and utilizing it with your own cleverness. Only you were careless, just one small trifle. How trivial!" Mahmud Abadi's tone was mocking.

Thorwald's mind had become suddenly a little hazy. He was taught! If he could only shoot his way out of this . . . his hand was groping toward his hip pocket.

"Stop!" Mahmud Abadi commanded. His fist bulged in his coat pocket, and there was something angular and menacing clutched in that fist.

Thorwald's arms dropped to his sides. "All right," he said. He knew he was doomed by the rune of the mummified priestess for trying to rob her coffin.

An hour later a track started out across the desert, headed for Laseer, in addition to an Egyptian detective and a young Egyptian driver, it bore a coffin-covered corpse, the coffin and body of an ancient priestess, and a silent man. A man who watched the staring marvel and variegated eyes of the mummy case before him and wondered in hazy fashion about the strange tracks of human destiny.

THE END

TERROR BENEATH THE TIDES

I NOTICE YOU ALWAYS FROWN AT THE SIGHT OF OLD RED DAVIS, MR. CHERNOCKY / DON'T YOU LIKE HIM?

LIKE HIM? I HATE THE THOUGHT OF THAT SENILE IDIOT! THIS IS A NICE, QUIET RESORT TOWN AND HIS FILTHY APPEARANCE IS BAD FOR BUSINESS!



NOBODY SEEMED TO MIND OLD RED DAVIS' PRESENCE IN THE LITTLE RESORT TOWN ON THE COAST OF CENTRAL CALIFORNIA. NOBODY, THAT IS, EXCEPT MR. MORTON CHERNOCKY, OWNER OF MOST OF THE HOTELS, COUNTRY CLUBS AND THE TOWN'S ONLY NEWSPAPER. BUT LITTLE DID CHERNOCKY SUSPECT THAT HE AND THE BEHRAULED HEADQUARTERS WOULD SOON FIND SOMETHING THEY HAD IN COMMON: THE SAME DETENT!

HE'S THE ONLY BLACK MARK ON THE TOWN! THE SLOPPY WRETCH! IF I HAD MY WAY, THERE'D BE A LAW AGAINST HIS KIND HERE!

I COULD DEFEND ME'D'S RIGHT TO LIVE AS HE CHOOSES, BUT IT'S USELESS! IT WOULD ONLY MAKE CHERNOCKY ANGRY AND MY JOB WOULD BE IN JEOPARDY!



ONLY GOT FOUR BUCKS FOR THAT PILE OF LUNK, BUT IT'LL DO FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS / OH, I'M TIRED! GUESS I'LL GET TO BED!



FATHERS, OLD HED FELL INTO A DEEP SLEEP IN HIS BRIDE BED. HOW LONG HE SLEPT, THERE WAS NO WAY OF TELLING, BUT IN THE FORENOON, HIS MOANS OF HORROR...



WHY WH... WHAT'S THAT NOISE? SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE'S AT THE DOOR! WHO'S THERE?

BOOOOEEET!

WHY DON'T YOU ANSWER? WHO ARE YOU? I'LL LIGHT A MATCH AND... AAGHHHHH!



FOR AN INSTANT, THE OLD MAN FROZE WITH TERROR IN THE BEST MOMENT, A GRASP OF STEEL ENVELOPED HIM. HIS FLAILING ARMS WERE NO MATCH FOR THE STRENGTH OF THE SEA-WEED MONSTROSITY!



LEHNEH! WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO WITH ME?

THE SHADOW ONLY SEEMED TO TERROR HIS MORE! BUT HIS FEARS WERE UNWARRANTED AS THE STRANGE, SLIMY CREATURE DROPPED HIM CLOSER TO WHERE THE POORMAN BRACKEN LAYED AGAINST THE SHORE!



NO! NO! LEHNEH! I CAN'T SWIM... I'LL DROWN! LEHNEH!

THE SHADOW ONLY SEEMED TO TERROR HIS MORE! BUT HIS FEARS WERE UNWARRANTED AS THE STRANGE, SLIMY CREATURE DROPPED HIM CLOSER TO WHERE THE POORMAN BRACKEN LAYED AGAINST THE SHORE!



HELP! IT'S OLD HED! WHAT? HE'S DEAD... LAYING OUT THERE ON THE BEACH! THAT AGAIN, SONNY!

I WENT OUT FOR AN EARLY SWIM AND I SAW IT! IT WAS OLD HED... DEAD! JUST LAYING THERE... LIKE HE'D BEEN WASHED AWAY! HEE HEE HEE! GOOD! THERE'S YOUR DAD'S WORK, CARRY! SO COVER IT!



SOON...

THIS WAS NO ACCIDENT! LOOK AT THOSE TRACKS! OLD HED WAS DRAGGED FROM HIS BRIDE BED... AND THOSE TRACKS CERTAINLY DON'T LOOK LIKE THEY WERE MADE BY ANYTHING HUMAN!



SURELY YOU DON'T THINK THAT SOMETHING CAME OUT OF THE SEA AND TRIED TO DRAG HED IN?



WAGGLED HIS TAIL UPON THEM FIRST WHEN THE THREE WAS UPON THEM?

CASEY? HE! HE'S GRABBED ME! I CAN'T
BREAK AWAY!

IT LOOKS
HUMAN, AND
YET... HE'VE LET
GO OF ME!



STAMMOTED, OF HIS OWN DANGER, CASEY LEAPED AT THE MONSTROUSITY, BOTH FISTS FLYING WILDLY AND WITH SAVAGE FURY. SUDDENLY, THE CREATURE LASHED OUT WITH A MIGHTY SWOOP OF HIS ARM AND...

LET ME GO!
CASEY? HELP!



AIEEEEE! CASEY! HELP ME!
HELP ME!



STELLA? WHAT'S THAT MONSTER DOING? MORE
SHALL I DOWN OUT THERE? STELLA, HOLD ON!
TRY AND BREAK AWAY FROM
HIM! I'M COMING!



THAT MUST'VE BEEN THE
THING THAT KILLED OLD HOO!
GREAT GUNS! THEY'VE DISAP-
PEARED! HE'S PULLED HER
UNDER THE SURFACE SOME-
WHERE OUT THERE! I'VE GOT
TO FIND THEM! I'VE GOT TO...
BEFORE STELLA DROWNS!



THEY DISAPPEARED SOMEWHERE
AROUND HERE! BUT IT'S SO DARK
AND MURKY, I CAN'T SEE A THING!
MY LUNGS... THEY'RE BURNING!
I'VE GOT TO GET BACK TO
THE SURFACE!



MEANWHILE, NOT FAR OFF...

WE...WE'VE CAUGHT A WHORLPOOL!
HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE BATTLING IT!
HE ACTS AS THOUGH HE KNEW IT WAS
HERE... HEADED STRAIGHT FOR IT!
OH, CASEY, WHERE ARE YOU?



FASTER AND FASTER THE SWIRLING EDDY WHIPPED THEM AROUND AND AROUND, FAR BELOW THE SURFACE!

IT SEEMED LIKE BARE MINUTES HAD PASSED WHEN STELLA RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS...

I CAN'T BUOY HIS ARM!
IT'S LIKE A STEEL CHAIN! OH!
I'M GETTING DIRT! I'M
GOING TO DROWN!

WHA, WHERE AM I? WHO
ARE YOU? WHY DID YOU
BRING ME HERE?

HAVE NO FEARS! WE
INTEND YOU NO HARM!
I SHALL EXPLAIN
ALL!

AS YOU CAN SEE, THE SEA
BOTTOM IS OUR HOME! IN
OUR REALM WE HAVE ALWAYS
NEED RULED BY A QUEEN,
BUT THE LAST WOMAN
AMONG US IS NOW DEAD!
THAT IS WHY YOU'VE BEEN
BROUGHT HERE! YOU ARE
TO SERVE AS OUR RULER!

LAST NIGHT, ONE OF OUR
PEOPLE WAS ACCIDENTALLY DIS-
COVERED WHILE LOOKING FOR A
QUEEN! OUR SAFETY DEPENDS
ON OUR EXISTENCE REMAINING KEPT
SECRET! THE OLD MAN HAD TO
BE DESTROYED!

WE'RE
UNDERWATER... AND
YET THERE'S AIR TO
BREATHE! I DON'T
UNDERSTAND IT!

THE WHIRLPOOL ABOVE IS AN ETERNAL
BREAK OF NATURE! IT SUCKS AIR DOWN-
WARD AT SUCH FORCE THAT OUR CITY IS
COVERED BY A SPHERE OF AIR! BUT
COME! THE CORONATION CEREMONY
IS READY!

NO! I WON'T BE
YOUR QUEEN! I RE-
FUSE TO STAY HERE!
I'D RATHER DIE!

MEANWHILE, ABOVE, REALIZING HIS HELPLESS-
NESS, CASEY HAD BURNED FOR HELP...

WHAT'S THAT? STELLA CRIED
UNDER THE WATER BY SOME
STRANGE SEA
MONSTER?

IT'S THE TRUTH!
I'VE GOT TO GET A DIVING
MASK WITH ONE OF THOSE
PORTABLE OXYGEN TANKS
IN A HURRY!

OF ALL THE
IMMEDIATE YARNIES!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

FOON...

MAYBE IT'S RIDICULOUS TO HOPE
SHE'S STILL ALIVE, BUT I WON'T
GIVE UP HOPE! I'M TAKING THIS
BATH TANK AND MASK JUST IN
CASE I FIND HER!

THIS IS THE
MOST FANTASTIC
THING I'VE EVER
HEARD! PROBABLY
SOME SORT OF
PRANK!

SEVERAL LONG MINUTES
LATER...

A WHIRLPOOL! I'D BETTER
SWIM AWAY FAST BEFORE IT
CATCHES ME AND DRAWS
ME UNDER! WHA...? IT...
IT'S NOT ME!



THIS THING'S AS VICIOUS AS
A TORNADO! I'VE GOT TO
PULL OUT OF IT! WHA! /
BETTER DEEP! THE PRESSURE
IS KILLING! CAN'T PULL OUT...
GOT TO FIND STEEL! /
OHHR!



SIPPING INTO A DEAD FISH, GABBY HAS
DRIFTED INTO THE UNDERSEA REALM AS HE
APOKE...!

THIS MAN DIED WITH THE GIRL WHEN I
DRAINED HER FROM THE BEACH!

NO DOUBT HE FOUND ME WAY HERE
SEARCHING FOR HER! HE KNOWS OUR
SECRETS! HE
MUST DIE! / NO! NO!



YOU MUSTN'T KILL HIM! I'LL ACCEPT! YOU HEARD!
I'LL BE YOUR QUEEN, BUT MY FIRST / YOUR QUEEN!
ORDER IS THAT HE BE RELEASED! / RELEASE



THE SURFACE
MAYBE WE CANNOT
LET HIM LEAVE HERE.
THOUGHBY WE SHALL
MAKE HIM ONE OF US!

AND WHAT IF
I REFUSE?

GABBY, THEY'LL KILL
YOU IF YOU DEFT
THEM!



I DON'T KNOW WHAT
CHANCE I'LL STAND
AGAINST THE BUNCH OF THEM,
BUT I'VE GOT TO CHANCE IT!
HERE BOYS!



IN AN INSTANT, THE CREATURES OF THE DEEP
BRASHED FORTH, RIPPING THE SPARK SWITCH
FROM HIS BELT, GABBY FOUND IT A HANDY
WEAPON! BUZZING, BODDING, SWIRLING, HE
MANAGED TO STAVE OFF THE LUNGING
MONSTROUS!



THEY'RE BEGINNING TO COME
TO! OH, GABBY, HOW WILL
WE EVER GET OUT OF
THIS TERRIBLE
PLACE?



I'M BEGINNING TO UNDER-
STAND THE SET-UP THAT
WHIRLPOOL'S PERPETUAL! /
THE FORCE OF THE AIR IT SUCKS
IN IS SO POWERFUL THAT IT POKES
THE BUBBLE OVER THE CITY! A
SUDDEN, POWERFUL PULS OF AIR
AGAINST IT NIGHT DESTROY
- IT COMPLETELY!



BUT HOW CAN YOU POSSIBLY CREATE SOME POWERFUL RUSH OF AIR?

THIS OTHER TANK, HONEY / THERE'S ENOUGH PRESSURE IN IT TO KNOCK YOU THROUGH A BRICK WALL / BUT IF IT WORKS, THE WATER WILL RUSH DOWN ON US FAST / YOU'LL HAVE TO GET YOUR MASK ON QUICKLY!



INSTANTLY, CASEY AND STELLA MOUNTED A HIGH CORAL FORMATION BEYOND THE RING OF THE VOLCANO, SPYING FROM POOL...

HOW TO LET OUT SOME AIR... LOOK / THE WHIRL-POOL'S SLOWING DOWN / THE PRESSURE'S DECREASED... WATER'S POURING IN / HURRY / GET THE MASKS!

OH! THOSE CREATURES ARE COMING AFTER US, CASEY!



THE CORAL CITY IS DESTROYED / THEY'LL ALL DROWN / WE GOT OUT OF THERE IN THE RIGID OF TIME!

MY CITY... MY PEOPLE / ALL GONE / BUT I'LL HAVE MY REVENGE!



SECONDS LATER, ON THE SURFACE

WOOF HE WINGS / LOOK / ONE OF THEM ISN'T DEAD / HE'S COMING AFTER US!

KEEP COME, STELLA / WE'LL BE ON THE BEACH BEFORE HE CAN CATCH US!



WE'D GIVEN UP HOPE FOR BOTH OF YOU / I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE ALIVE / WHAT HAPPENED?

TELL YOU LATER / ONE OF THESE MONSTERS IS RIGHT BEHIND US!



WH...? WHY, THERE IS SOMEONE THERE / IT MUST BE SOME SORT OF PUBLICITY STUNT.

ARRIVED AT THIS APPARENT RESORT TO HIS INTELLIGENCE, MORTON CHERNOBY BOUNDED TOWARD THE MONSTER...



THAT'S WHAT IT IS... A PUBLICITY STUNT / IT'S AN ORDINARY MAN WITH SOME SORT OF GUSTAR / I'LL SHOW YOU / I'LL SHUT IT OFF!

WH...? IT'S REAL / IT'S A MONSTER / LET HE GO / AAAAAH!

A FURLOAGE OF BULLETS BROUGHT DEATH TO THE LAST OF THE WING SEA-WING MONSTERS / BUT NOT BEFORE MORTON CHERNOBY AND ALSO DEAD, FROM STRANGLATION



STRANGE HOW JUSTICE WORKS / SOME "BAD PUBLICITY" PROBABLY WOULD HAVE CLOSED THE BEACH, BUT AT LEAST CHERNOBY WOULD HAVE BEEN SPARED THIS HORRIBLE DEATH / AND ALL BECAUSE HE REFUSED TO PRINT THE TRUTH!